

**I. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claim 2 without prejudice. Kindly amend claims 1, 6, 7, 9 and 11 as follows.

The following claims will replace all prior listings, or versions, of claims in the above-captioned application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) An epoxy resin molding material for sealing, comprising an epoxy resin, an epoxy resin curing agent, and a pitch, wherein the pitch comprises mesophase microspheres isolated from a mesophase pitch.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1, wherein an electrical resistivity of the pitch is at least  $1 \times 10^5 \Omega \cdot \text{cm}$ .

4. (Previously Presented) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1, wherein a carbon content of the pitch is within a range from 88 to 96% by weight.

5. (Previously Presented) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1, further comprising one or more materials selected from the group consisting of phthalocyanine-based dyes, phthalocyanine-based pigments, aniline black, perylene black, black iron oxide, and black titanium oxide as a colorant that contains no pitch.

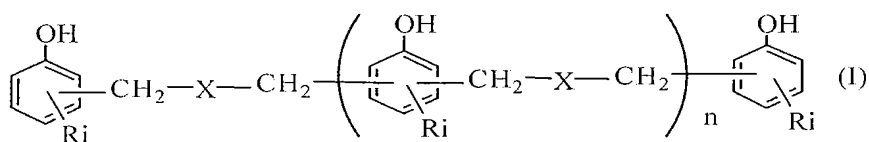
6. (Currently Amended) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1, wherein a combined quantity of the colorant that contains no pitch and the pitch is within a range from 2 to 15% by weight relative to the epoxy resin.

7. (Currently Amended) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1, wherein a quantity of the pitch relative to the combined quantity of the colorant that contains no pitch and the pitch is at least 30% by weight.

8. (Previously Presented) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1, comprising, as the epoxy resin, one or more resins selected from the group consisting of biphenyl type epoxy resins, bisphenol F type epoxy resins, thiodiphenol type epoxy resins, phenol-aralkyl type epoxy resins, and naphthol-aralkyl type epoxy resins.

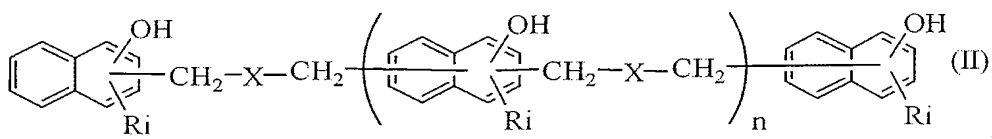
9. (Currently Amended) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1, comprising, as the curing agent, one or more resins selected from the group consisting of phenol-aralkyl resins represented by a general formula (I) shown below and naphthol-aralkyl resins represented by a general formula (II) shown below:

[Formula 1]



(wherein; each R represents a hydrogen atom, or a substituted or unsubstituted monovalent hydrocarbon group of 1 to 12 carbon atoms, which may be all identical, or may be different, I represents either 0 or an integer from 1 to 3, X represents a bivalent organic group comprising an aromatic ring, and n represents either 0 or an integer from 1 to 10); and;

[Formula 2]



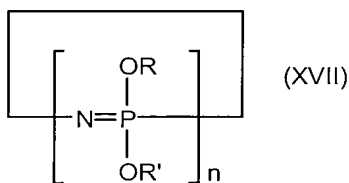
(wherein; each R represents a hydrogen atom, or a substituted or unsubstituted monovalent hydrocarbon group of 1 to 12 carbon atoms, which may be all identical, or may be different, I represents either 0 or an integer from 1 to 3, X represents a bivalent organic group comprising an aromatic ring, and n represents either 0 or an integer from 1 to 10).

10. (Previously Presented) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1, further comprising a cyclic phosphazene compound.

11. (Currently Amended) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to

claim 10, wherein the cyclic phosphazene compound comprises a compound represented by a general formula (XVII) shown below:

[Formula 3]



(wherein, n represents an integer from 3 to 5, and R and R' each represent an alkyl group of 1 to 4 carbon atoms or an aryl group, which may be either identical or different).

12. (Original) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 11, wherein at least one of R and R' represents a hydroxyphenyl group, and a number of hydroxyphenyl groups is within a range from 1 to 10.

13. (Previously Presented) The epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 10, comprising a cross-linked cyclic phosphazene compound.

14. (Previously Presented) An electronic component comprising an element that is sealed with the epoxy resin molding material for sealing according to claim 1.